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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Plan Overview and Purpose

The West Valley has experienced a rapid surge of urban growth in the last few years and projections show this rapid growth continuing into the future. Historically, this region has been based on agricultural land uses and activities. Today, many agricultural activities are being replaced by urban development including the planning area. For example, in 2000 there were only 1,150 people within the planning area. However, based on build-out of the Old U.S. Highway 80 future land use plan, the population could reach 243,000 people.

The *Old U.S. Highway 80 Area Plan* is an entirely new plan which removes portions of the *State Route 85 Area Plan* and the *Tonopah/Arlington Area Plan*. There is general consensus by the Old U.S. Highway 80 community that portions of the State Route 85 Area Plan and the Tonopah/Arlington Area Plan do not accurately reflect community needs for future growth and development. Therefore, the new Old U.S. Highway 80 Area Plan is intended to reflect the community's wide variety of opinions.

The Old U.S. Highway 80 Area Plan provides recommendations for various planning related issues. The plan provides urban densities in certain areas while providing a rural alternative for those who wish to enjoy the rural lifestyle. The plan promotes the compatibility of residential, commercial, industrial, and employment land uses. The plan seeks to minimize impacts to the natural environment, reduce demand on groundwater supplies, and encourage the protection of vital open space areas and wildlife habitat. Most importantly, the Old U.S. Highway 80 Area Plan accounts for stakeholder and resident comments, concerns, and recommendations.

Public Participation

Old U.S. Highway 80 residents, private and public stakeholders, and community work group members involved in the planning process were very helpful in identifying a variety of growth-related issues and concerns. A list of the local issues and concerns affecting the outcome of the future land use plan are included below. These issues are taken from **Table 23: Issue Identification**.

- Encourage higher residential densities near Buckeye and Gila Bend
- Rural type uses/employment in western portion of the planning area
- Promote employment/industrial land uses near Palo Verde NGS and along the railroad tracks
- Industrial should encourage a diversity of job opportunities
- Promote compatible land uses along designated emergency evacuation routes
- Encourage land uses compatible with existing Palo Verde and Arlington Elementary Schools
- Provide rural alternative to DMP/HOA living (west of Hassayampa River and north of Gillespie Dam)

- Promote power plant water rights property as Open Space and/or delineating floodplains and/or floodways as Potential Open Space
- Commercial uses that tie into Old U.S. Highway 80 and State Route 85
- Preserve Hickman's by keeping areas around this farm facility compatible
- Other comments: protect dark skies and no obstructive signage

Conclusion

It is important to note that the Old U.S. Highway 80 Area Plan is not a document that represents final buildout as many municipal general plans typically do. Rather, it prepares for and accommodates growth over the next ten to fifteen years, but will be reexamined and updated as necessary to reflect current conditions and changes. While not a complete solution, the Old U.S. Highway 80 Area Plan helps address the effects of growth and development by enhancing cooperation between government agencies, citizens, and other affected interests, and by considering regional implications.

Area Plan Elements

This Area Plan contains a series of goals, objectives, and policies used to define development standards, guide public investment, and guide public and private decision making. A complete list of policies is included within the plan.

Land Use

Goal L1:

Promote efficient land development that is compatible with adjacent land uses, is well integrated with the transportation system, and is sensitive to the natural environment.

Objective L1.1: Encourage orderly, efficient, and functional development patterns.

Objective L1.2: Promote high quality residential development that is sensitive to the natural environment and compatible with adjacent land uses.

Objective L1.3: Promote high quality retail commercial, employment center, and mixed uses that are properly located proximate to populated areas.

Objective L1.4: Preserve the scenic and where appropriate, the rural character of the Old U.S. Highway 80 planning area.

Transportation

Goal T1:

Provide an efficient, cost-effective, integrated, accessible, environmentally sensitive, and safe multi-modal system that addresses existing and future roadway networks, and promotes transit, bikeways, and pedestrian travel.

Objective T1.1: Establish a safe, convenient, and efficient system for existing and future roadways while considering the need for equestrian and multi-use trails access in the Old U.S. Highway 80 planning area.

Environment/Environmental Effects

Goal E1:

Promote development that mitigates adverse environmental impacts on the natural and cultural environment, preserves highly valued wildlife habitat, minimizes flooding and drainage problems, and protects historical and archaeological resources.

Objective E1.1: Encourage development that is compatible with natural environmental features.

Objective E1.2: Preserve significant natural and cultural resources.

Objective E1.3: Improve air quality, water quality, and reduce noise impacts.

Objective E1.4: Preserve significant habitat areas for wildlife and native plant species.

Economic Development

Goal ED1:

Promote a growing, balanced, efficient, and diversified economy, consistent with available resources, that enhances quality employment opportunities, improves quality of life, and is sensitive to the natural and cultural environment.

Objective ED1.1: Encourage quality employment opportunities by supporting efforts that encourage business formation and expansion.

Objective ED1.2: Encourage a wide range of commercial activities in commercial designated areas.

Growth Areas

Goal G.1:

Promote orderly, timely, and fiscally responsible growth in Maricopa County.

Objective G.1.1: Encourage timely, orderly, and fiscally responsible growth within the planning area and within mixed use Development Master Plans.

Objective G.1.2: Ensure that future growth is coordinated in an efficient manner with stakeholder input.

Open Space

Goal O1:

Maintain and, where necessary, encourage expanding the open space system for Maricopa County to address public access, connectivity, education, preservation, buffering, quantity, quality, and diversity for regionally significant open spaces.

Objective 01.1: Promote physical and visual public access to natural open space resources.

Objective 01.2: Establish regional natural open space connectivity and linkages for both recreation and wildlife purposes.

Objective 01.3: Protect and enhance environmentally sensitive areas, including existing natural washes; steep slopes; historical, cultural, and archaeological resources; view corridors; sensitive desert; and significant wildlife habitat and ecosystems.

Objective 01.4: Encourage appropriate open space between potentially incompatible land uses.

Objective 01.5: Enhance the quantity, quality, and diversity of open space and recreational opportunities where public access is provided.

Objective 01.6: Promote the economic, environmental, and quality of life benefits of natural open space.

Water Resources

Goal W1:

Promote development that makes conservative use of renewable water supplies such as effluent, surface water, and Central Arizona Project water when feasible, as well as non-renewable sources like groundwater.

Objective W1.1: Encourage protection and enhancement of renewable water and groundwater supplies within the framework of state and federal laws, regulations, and guidelines for existing and future needs.

Goal W2:

Reduce the impacts of development on water quality.

Objective W2.1: Encourage voluntary actions and support federal, state, and local regulations and guidelines that protect and preserve current and future groundwater quality in the planning area.

Cost of Development

Goal C1:

Ensure that new development pays its fair and proportional share of the cost of additional public facility and service needs generated by new development.

Objective C1.1: Develop a method to determine the need for, and assess the costs of, new facilities and services required to serve new development in order to maintain service levels.

Objective C1.2: Adopt and implement level of service standards for new development to help promote consistency and certainty in the cost sharing process.

Agenda for Action

To help ensure effectiveness, stakeholders helped identify various long and short-term actions that will assist in plan implementation. Many of these actions require the continued participation of area residents, as well as public and private organizations. A complete list of actions is included within the plan.